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OFFICIALS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Conference Call August 5, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by Coleman. He read the Mission and Conflict of Interest statements.

PRESENT: Coleman Bye*, Gwenn Lochstet*, Mary Poletto*, Rick Carson*, Tiffany Epoca*, John Nelson*, Rob Jorgensen, Jamie Platt, Mike Seip, Carlos Inacio (*Denotes voting members)

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Mike Wigginton, Jack Behm, Kylie McMurray

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The July 2024 minutes were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Tom Estep has resigned from the committee for personal reasons. Coleman has accepted his resignation. Allie DeFrehn is also no longer on the committee. Currently, there are 9 voting members of the OC. Five members are needed for a quorum.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Staff Liaison – Mike Seip

- He has processed 109 meets so far for the next season. They are posted on the website, and he is working through them.
- He will meet with Meet Referees and Meet Directors from the LC Championships series soon to gather feedback.

OC Chair - Coleman

- The recent OC Chairs meeting had a different format, allowing questions to be submitted in advance. He reports two key takeaways: the presentation of MAAPP Guidelines for Junior Officials and Guidelines for conducting evaluations at an OQM meet.
- He noted that the NOC is launching a recruitment initiative to address the decline in official volunteerism. MA is bucking the trend with increases in officials. The chair of the NOC inquired about our efforts at recruiting, and Coleman shared about MA's RR&A initiative.

Training - Rick

- He has no current request for training, but he is preparing sessions for CJ, Referee, and Starter for the Fall.
- Rick did not plan on holding AO training sessions because the national modules will come out on October 1. Mary advised that perhaps we should hold some more AO sessions in August and September in advance of the national modules. Those trainees should take the test before Oct. 1, to be grandfathered in.
- He reported that York made requests about the Wallet app for checking MA certifications. He also noted that some clubs are not verifying officials certifications at meets. This led to a discussion of additional communication and enforcement of the practice. Coleman will send out

another email remind referees in charge of the meet that it is their responsibility to validate credentials. The Wallet app is the best way to do it at the meet.

Coach Representative - John

- He shared about a coach's failure to DFS a swimmer at Prelims at Junior Champs, leading to his inability to swim in a final that day, as per MA championship scratch rules. John wonders if we could revisit the scratch rules so that 13&U swimmers are not penalized for a coach's error.
- Coleman indicated that we would discuss this as new business in a future meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

RR&A Initiative

- The RR&A Workgroup has created two short videos:
 - *Why did you become an official?*
 - *What do you like most about officiating?*
- A flyer has also been created. This is to be distributed at all championship meets. They plan to enlarge it into a poster. Rick shared that another LSC has made a recruiting poster with an Olympian on it. He will try to find a MA Olympian so that we could make a similar poster.
- The videos will be placed on the new MA Swimming website. Mary suggested that they be listed on social media also.

LAC Holiday Cup

- Coleman investigated practices of other LSC's when a club requested to host an OQM meet. Barb Ship of PVS indicated that the LSC pays for travel expenses and the club pays for lodging of the evaluator for the one club-hosted OQM they hold each year.
- It was decided that Coleman will meet with Sam from LAC to discuss the process. We will likely offer support in finding an evaluator and securing team leads. They will need N2 certified MR and AR.

NEW BUSINESS

LC Championship Series

- Coleman shared some of the difficulties experienced at Silvers.
- Rick indicated that the group tasked with establishing a transparent process for choosing MR's and AR's for championships will meet soon. They hope to have a process in place by the start of the SC season.
- It will be difficult to secure venues for future championships with Keystone Aquatics closing and renovations taking place at F&M and Bucknell.

Administrative OC Issues

- Coleman pointed out the need to have backups in every position in case of unforeseen circumstances.
- Rick requested that MA provide a shared drive for some spreadsheets containing officials information. Rob is converting and decoupling the database from the old Officials website to make it more portable. He may be able to incorporate the need for shared data in the process.

NEXT MEETING: The date was changed to Tuesday, September 3, 2024, to avoid meeting on Labor Day.

ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned at 8:19 pm.

Minutes Submitted by Gwenn Lochstet